

JARED PARKER.

A story of Strife and Revenge.

By LUCIUS MARKHAM.

On one of the most fertile glades of the Scioto valley there settled some twenty years ago two wealthy families, from the interior of Pennsylvania. The hope of these families and the pride of the neighborhood were two boys, verging upon manhood, who were first at log rollings, cabin raisings, and corn huskings, as well as foremost in all the rustic sports by which holiday afternoons and moonlight evenings were beguiled.

In all games and labors these youths were competitors, but Jared Parker, by one year the elder of Herbert Williams, was commonly the victor. He was more athletic, but he was less passionate, more self-controlled and less impetuous. Jared was of a pleasant, genial nature, and bore his honors meekly. Herbert was vexed to the heart's core when vanquished, and bitter feelings were stirred when his companions laughed merrily with Jared or complimented him upon his agility and dexterity. Jared knew no rival, but Herbert dwelt on one thing with evil thoughts, he determined should eventually be decided in his favor.

The "Rose of the Valley" was Anne Belvey, a true country beauty, with artless grace of manner, speaking beauty of face, symmetry of person and ardent affection, which rubbed her nature hard, had won the hearts of acquaintances who met her at the green-sward dance, or at the winter party. Jared loved Anne, so did Herbert. Anne loved, but it was with the love which had never settled its own preferences and "wells up whenever admiration is excited or sympathy enlisted."

The silver moonlight fell upon the opening blossoms of choice fruit trees, and a gentle wind wafted orchard perfumes which came with glad welcome to a maiden who had seen the bloom of sixteen spring-times, as she leaned against a rustic well which had been placed where the fruit blossoms dropped, picking slowly to pieces a wild flower that had grown at her feet.

"I want you to be a friend, Herbert—I like you when you are kind, but I do not love you as you ask, because I know you are cruel and wicked sometimes."

Said Anne Belvey, when Herbert Williams had poured a tale of tender love into her ears; with that bright moonlight shining about them; the spring blossoms falling and the perfumes wafting.

"They have told you tales, Anne."

"Who, Herbert?"

"Jared and his friends."

"You wrong him, Herbert, Jared always speaks well of you. I told him you were cruel and would be revengeful, but he said I did not understand you. You know, Herbert, when I wanted you yesterday to put up the bird's nest for me, and the apple tree, you tore it to pieces and threw it over the fence. I did not like that; Jared would not have done so."

These were bitter words to the dark spirit of Herbert Williams, but he bit his lips sternly and struggled with his rising anger, till the veins of his neck corrugated. He had love and rivalry to assist in self-control.

"But I was in sport, Anne, when I tore the bird's nest, because it was an old one."

"No, Herbert, it had for two years been the house of robins; I watched over it with pleasure, and it seemed to me to see so heartlessly destroy their home. It was to them as if it were a child, and I could not tear down your home and leave your little sisters without a shelter. But this is not all, Herbert, if it were, I might forgive you. I know we never can be lovers—we would not be happy as such, but let us always be friends."

And Anne gave Herbert her hand as freely as if he had never grieved her. The lover took it with a nervous grasp, which he expressed the feelings of the young man's heart, would have wrung the slender arm from the fair-shoulder.

A voice rebuked the young couple, and Anne said: "Mother calls me. Good night, Herbert, remember we will always be friends." And the open-hearted girl bounded to answer the mother's summons.

There was a heavy frown upon Herbert's brow; his teeth were set, his fists were clenched, and his step was heavy. As he stole homeward—"I'll be revengeful."

When Anne Belvey was alone in her little chamber, Herbert's conversation was vivid in her mind, and her calm judgment commended the truths she had told him. Then there came contrasts; actions, characters and thoughts were reviewed. Jared Parker was not an indifferent actor in this little heart drama, performed in the waking and sleeping dreams of the free thinking and generous-hearted young girl that night.

The spring blossoms had fallen, the perfumes of the opening buds and happiness dwelt in their hearts had grown, and now the fragrance of the ripening orchard products was gladdening the hearts of the farmers.

Anne Belvey had the same seat at which we saw her with Herbert Williams.

"Herbert is wicked," said she to Jared, "he looks darkly at me, and frowns when he meets me. I sometimes fear him, Jared, but it shall not interfere with my love for you."

"Herbert is not to be feared, love. He would not harm you, nor me; perhaps, had I lost you, I should have frowned and looked darkly, as he does, but you should not now let these thoughts come across your mind. To-morrow will show him how little future he will have, and he will be reconciled and be a warm friend again."

"May it be so, Jared, but I fear that you do not know Herbert; I only read that he will be revengeful on you. He is revengeful."

"I have no fears, Anne, and you ought not to have; but come, we will walk into the house, and, with your father and mother, talk over the plans of the morning, when you will be mine."

A year elapsed—to Anne and Jared Parker was born a son—content and happiness dwelt in their household—their plain cabin was one of the "general homes" of the neighborhood; and its merry-makings were the pleasantest which the young folks attended.

There was one who had no pleasure in this enjoyment; but whenever he observed it, it was as if it were a thorn in his side, and it was spoken of as "that make men fit for stratagems and spoils."

"Twas a winter night; piercing winds made blazing fires comfortable, the dry snow crashed beneath the farmer's tread, a lurid flame rose in the air, and all gleamed over the ceiling's winter covering, dispelled the darkness for miles around the mansion of the Williams family. Their large, well-stored barn was in flames; every possible exertion was made to save it, but without success, and its ruins smoldered where were buried the ashes of a number of fine cattle and superior horses, with farming utensils, and grain and fruits, to the value of several thousand dollars."

It was the work of an incendiary, without doubt. Who could be the villain? was a question anxiously discussed.

Various suspicions were started, and at length a rumor became current that Jared Parker had been implicated. He was arrested, examined, and, strange to declare, almost without testimony to justify suspicion, was held to trial.

The strifes which had existed between Jared, the accused, and Herbert, now the injured, were speculated upon; facts were distorted, actions misinterpreted, and many who had otherwise been highly of Jared's quiet, mild nature, now talked of it as a mask for wild passions and long nursed revenge—for what?—few had a definite idea, but he was under suspicion of crime, and with some persons this is always equivalent to actual proof of guilt.

Anne had fearful forebodings, but Jared told her not to fear, promising her his innocence—in which she had every confidence—yet she feared the result of machinations which might be invented against him. Jared had no suspicion of what testimony could be produced, and made no preparation for his trial, confident that he would be acquitted.

On the day of the Court House was crowded with the friends of the accused and the accuser. A distorted history of Jared and Herbert's competitions were presented to the jury; then a woman named Brown, who had many times been hospitably entertained at Jared's home, was put upon the witness stand. She testified that on the night of the conflagration, Jared Parker came to a house where she was visiting with a Mrs. Jacobs, asked for some fire, obtained it, and went down the lane towards Williams' farm. Mrs. Jacobs said there was something wrong, he must be watched. They followed him

and saw him enter the barn—in a few moments the roof was a sheet of flames.

Jared had been away from home that night—he could not prove an alibi—the witness was cross-questioned, but at all particulars appeared consistent, and Jared Parker was found guilty of arson, and sentenced to the penitentiary for eighteen years.

Mrs. Jacobs had removed from the neighborhood during the time intervening between the commission of the crime and the trial. Every possible exertion was made by Jared's friends to ascertain her whereabouts, but without success, and he was committed to a gloomy cell in the State Prison.

Anne Parker, with a woman's determination, where her exertion is called for in the rescue of a loved one, resolved that Mrs. Jacobs should be found. Immediately she set about the search—gradually her means were exhausted—then she was a pensioner on the bounties of her relatives. Every phantom of a rumor, which gave suspicion of the woman's residence, was pursued by Anne, in confidence that she should prove her husband's innocence, until further search seemed in vain; and it became the settled conclusion that Mrs. Jacobs could no longer be among the living.

Twelve years had elapsed—Jared Parker had yet six to atone for the crime for which he stood condemned. Still he protested his innocence—he declared it would one day be proclaimed.

He was a favorite with the officers of the prison; his good conduct had secured him many favors, and at length reached the ears of the Governor of our State. He visited the prison, heard Jared's story, and resolved to institute search for the Mrs. Jacobs described. He knew nothing of the exertions Anne Parker had made, because he had not told Jared his intentions.

A lawyer was employed to conduct the search for the woman on whom the evidence rested. He was on a visit to Cincinnati, and inserted an advertisement in the papers, that by calling at a certain office, which had been placed where the fruit blossoms dropped, picking slowly to pieces a wild flower that had grown at her feet.

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BY MAGNETIC TELEGRAPH.

[From the Madison Papers.]

WASHINGTON, Feb. 23, 8 P. M.

SENATE.—Mr. Seward presented petitions for the repeal of the fugitive slave law.

Mr. Underwood called on the joint resolution making military bounty land warrants assignable. After a debate of considerable duration, the bill was ordered to be engrossed.

The civil and diplomatic appropriation bill was taken up.

The provision for a custom-house in Pittsburgh was taken up.

Other amendments were proposed and discussed. A long discussion took place on the action appropriating twenty-five thousand dollars for a custom-house and post-office at Louisville, which was finally struck out. The bill was not disposed of when the Senate adjourned.

HOUSE.—After the usual routine, the joint resolution, making an allowance to Mr. Ritchie for loss sustained in executing the Congressional printing, was taken up and ordered to be engrossed.

Subsequently the resolution was taken up and put on its passage, and, after three hours' debate, was passed.

Mr. Julian made an ineffectual endeavor to introduce a resolution appointing a committee to investigate Mr. Allen's charge of corruption against Hon. Daniel Webster.

The army appropriation bill was then taken up, discussed, and passed.

The House then took a recess.

TORONTO, Canada, Feb. 23, 8 P. M.

A large anti-slavery meeting, called by the mayor, was held in the City Hall last evening. A society was formed called the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada, the declared object of which is to aid in the liberation of all slaves all over the world and to manifest sympathy with fugitives from the United States.

NEW YORK, Feb. 23, 8 P. M.

The Crescent City sailed this afternoon for Glasgow with a large number of passengers.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 23.

The Wheeling bridge case has been continued, on application of defendants, want of time to argue exceptions to Chancellor Walworth's report.

WASHINGTON, March 1st.

SENATE.—Saturday.—Mr. Cooper presented petitions in favor of the motion picture of the Erie Canal.

Mr. Wales presented the credentials of Mr. Bayard, U. S. Senator, from Delaware.

Mr. Pearce called up the bill abolishing constructive mileage of members.

After some debate the question was taken and the bill passed.

Mr. John Davis moved the River and Harbor bill be taken up.

HOUSE.—Last evening's session.—The bill appropriating to the different States ten million acres of public land for the benefit of indigent insane, was taken up, and after debate laid over.

The House then took up the bill for the relief of the Atlantic from obtaining publicity. I take the liberty of sending you a correct narrative of facts, compiled from the log, and for which I am personally vouch.

The Atlantic left Liverpool on the 25th December, in fine steaming condition, and without any apprehension on the part of her officers in regard to the voyage. It was blowing a strong gale at the time of her departure from W. S. W., so much so as to render it impossible to secure the safety of the vessel.

On the 26th December, at 9:30 P. M., she passed Cape Clear, and fairly commenced her homeward voyage by plunging at once into a heavy head sea, and steering strong westerly gales, which continued for some time, and for the time following up to the 27th of the accident. On the 6th of January at noon, she was in lat. 46 1/2 long. 41 W., it blowing strong gales from W. N. W. At 6:30 P. M., the engines were stopped, as it was at first supposed, by the engineers on account of the breaking of the eccentric strap to the starboard engine—and, on examination, it was determined to go ahead again, working that engine by hand; but another revolution of the wheels proved that the accident was not in the eccentric strap, but in the main shaft, which was found broken completely through, in a diagonal direction, the bearing of the starboard pillar block, and the additional turn after the first stoppage, caused one part of the shaft to lap over the other—thus fracturing the shaft in two places, rendering the engines perfectly useless. The ship was at once hoisted under storm canvas, the wheels lashed, and all hands employed during the night, and for the following day, in securing up her square yards, and stripping her of the canvas, and the deck was covered with ice, but fortunately accomplished without accident.

On the 7th and 8th, laying to, with the hope of an abatement of the wind, and a change of wind, the captain and all hands were extremely anxious to reach so port on our own coast. On the 9th the wind hauled to the north-west and became quite moderate. Immediately the ship was ordered to make sail, and in a few miles distant, and New York 1,400. This weather continued until midnight of the 10th, when an observation placed the ship 180 miles south and 70 miles west of her position at the time of her accident. A gale now sprung up from the south-west, and it became necessary to leave the ship; for even with moderate weather it was evident to all that she could do nothing by the wind under canvas. At 5 A. M. of the 11th, a large ship sailed homeward, and the ship was ordered to make sail, and in a few miles distant, and New York 1,400. 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